

UNITED STATES POLICY IN AFGHANISTAN:
ESTABLISHING DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND
SECURITY IN THE WAKE OF PARLIAMENTARY
ELECTIONS

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UNITED STATES POLICY IN AFGHANISTAN: ESTABLISHING DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND SECURITY IN THE WAKE OF PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2005

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:35 a.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Henry J. Hyde (Chairman of the Committee) presiding.

Chairman HYDE. The Committee will come to order.

The purpose of today's hearing is to hear from Administration officials about the United States long term commitment to Afghanistan. Members of this Committee hope to better understand the strategies in place to ensure the long term stability and security of Afghanistan in the post-election period.

Since its liberation from the Taliban in 2001, Afghanistan has made great strides in the political reconstruction process. In 2003, a constitution was drafted, debated, and approved. Presidential elections were held in October 2004, and Parliamentary and provincial elections were held this past Sunday.

Despite new threats of violence by the Taliban to derail the elections, and intimidation posed by local warlords, millions of Afghans turned out to vote, making a statement about their determination to support a democratic state governed by the rule of law, and not by the rule of a gun.

The political reconstruction process outlined in the Bonn Agreement has played a crucial role in defining Afghanistan's democratic development. However, Afghanistan still faces many challenges before democratic governance is secured. The international community must continue to be engaged in Afghanistan if the factors contributing to its instability are to be overcome. I support the call for a post-election road map, coupled together with donor assistance, that will strengthen the political process, empower Afghan institutions, and provide a measure of success for facing the challenges that lie ahead.

Initial reports suggest that voter turnout was significantly lower than the last national elections. Out of 12.5 million registered votes, 6 million participated in last Sunday's elections. This is an approximate decline of 20 percent, compared with the Presidential elections in October, when voter turnout represented 70 percent of registered voters.

One year ago in a hearing before this Committee, I emphasized the important role of the international community in supporting the ability of President Karzai to deliver real change to the Afghan people. I underscored the danger that Afghans might become disenchanted with the democratic process as a means to secure their livelihoods if their expectations were not met. Unfortunately, explanations accounting for the decreased voter turnout point in that direction.

One young Afghan student who explained the meaning behind the declining rate of political participation by Afghan citizens said the following:

“In my opinion the expectations that people had from their President during the Presidential elections were not fulfilled, and it led to frustration, and this frustration has made people have a different reaction to these elections.”

I hope to hear from our witnesses today about what the United States, the international community, and President Karzai could have done differently to instill the confidence of the Afghan people in the integrity of the recent elections, and a belief that voting is worthwhile. Looking to the future, what is being done to inspire trust in the political process?

While the final results won't be released until next month, there are signs that the national assembly might become factionalized and vulnerable to corruption by powerful personalities. What remains to be seen is the impact which this will have on the Afghan Government in developing viable democratic institutions that can effectively govern the people that they are meant to serve.

One of the greatest threats to democratic governance in Afghanistan is the alarming rate of poppy production. While there has been some progress on the reduction of opium cultivation, according to the United Nation's Office on Drugs and Crime, good weather and increased rains produced a bumper drug yield this year, so that Afghanistan still produced 4,100 tons of opium, 87 percent of the world's supply. These drugs will in-turn fund terrorism, corrupt democratic institutions, such as the new Parliament, and make democratic security much more difficult to produce.

Our own State Department's opium eradication efforts did not reach expectations. We are also fearful of some stepping backwards by the Afghan Government in its commitment toward fighting drugs. Specifically, I am concerned that the Afghan Government may be wavering in its commitment to extradite some of the major drug lords who promote and deal in drugs, and who ultimately fund the terrorists from the billions of dollars which these narcotics generate.

The fact remains that a stable Afghanistan will require cooperation and a strong effort by the Afghans. Security, counternarcotics, and the rule of law, must improve if Afghans are to have confidence in, and participate in, their emerging democracy. A lack of success in these areas will undermine the credibility of the democratic process and may risk demoralizing the aspirations of Afghan citizens and jeopardize their ability to actively shape and strengthen representative governing institutions.

President Karzai has shown courage in leading his nation under challenging circumstances. I hope that he will remain strong and hold corrupt officials accountable for their actions.

We have a distinguished panel before us today, representing the Bush Administration. I look forward to hearing their testimonies on these issues. And now with pleasure, I yield to my colleague and friend, the ranking Democratic Member, Tom Lantos, for such opening remarks as he may choose to make.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to commend you for holding this important hearing. One year ago, millions of Afghan men and women defied the threats of al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and other extremist thugs, to vote for a head of state for the very first time in Afghanistan's history.

Nearly three-quarters of eligible voters showed up to cast their ballots, standing in lines for hours, knowing that they could be attacked at any time. They elected Hamid Karzai their President in an overwhelming mandate.

The forces of extremism and hatred, fueled by contempt for freedom and peace, failed to frighten away the people of Afghanistan from the polls.

The election was not only a vote of confidence in President Karzai. It was also a referendum on Osama bin Laden, his murderous organization, and his hirelings, to the Taliban.

The people spoke categorically: This is our country, and we will control our own destiny. This week brought another election to Afghanistan—not as dramatic as last year's, but no less a powerful and historic event.

The country held its first Parliamentary elections in decades, and millions of Afghan men and women again defied the crude threats, intimidation, and terrorist attacks. They knew that the extremists fear nothing more than people exercising their right to choose their government freely.

They proved that al-Qaeda and the Taliban have no future in Afghanistan—groups whose warped ideology and despotic dreams were trampled under-foot by the millions of brave Afghan people as they walked again to the polls.

The turnout appears to have been lower for the historic national elections for President Karzai, as might be expected. One reason may have been the confusing nature of the ballot.

Voters were confronted with ballots that were in some cases seven pages long, listing literally hundreds of candidates with tiny photos, and the bewildering selection of logos that bore no evident relationship to the candidates that they were meant to represent.

There are reports of voters being overwhelmed at the poles by this spectacle and unable to locate their chosen candidates in the sea of thumbnail images on the ballots. Our witnesses today will provide their views on these and other obstacles, and on the Administration's plans to address these difficulties in future elections.

But there is another threat to Afghan democracy, Mr. Chairman, as you have indicated, one that could kill it slowly and quietly, but just as certainly as the Taliban—the drug economy.

Narcotics trafficking accounts for nearly a third of Afghanistan's economy. A significant portion of that income may be diverted to

terrorist groups that offer protection for the transport of narcotics out of the country.

I hope that our witnesses today will be able to offer some initial insights into what impact this huge illicit economy may have had on this election. I would like to hear them also address how the drug economy will affect Afghanistan's Parliament as it takes its first steps toward becoming a viable part of the country's body politic.

There is serious potential, I fear, for corruption of members of Parliament, and what impact might that have on the coalition and Kabul's counternarcotics efforts? I hope that our witnesses can tell us more about the warlords, former warlords, and candidates supported by warlords who may have become members of this new Parliamentary body.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, at the risk of annoying my colleagues by calling on this issue *ad nauseam* and *ad infinitum*, I renew my call for NATO to do more in Afghanistan.

I have been pleased that after repeated urging by Members of Congress and the Administration, NATO has expanded its area of responsibility beyond the North to the volatile but currently stable West.

But far more remains to be done. Specifically, NATO combat units should be assigned to protect international teams working on reconstruction in areas prone to conflict and violence; NATO protection should not be limited to teams working in the relatively peaceful and stable North and West. NATO forces should also actively be engaged in counternarcotics interdiction missions.

If Afghanistan becomes a narco-state, as it may well, then Europe, the main consumer of Afghan opium, will pay a heavy price tomorrow for its military timidity today. I must say, if I may digress for a moment, Mr. Chairman, that a large group of wealthy European countries, with vast military forces, which has been protected overwhelmingly by the United States for two generations, should be able to mount a more effective presence in Afghanistan.

It seems incomprehensible to a rational human being that France, Germany, Italy, the low countries, the Scandinavians, and others, the new NATO members, together cannot mount a significant NATO presence in Afghanistan, one of the great potential success stories for the civilized world, which still hangs in the balance because NATO is timid, pathetic, and unwilling to step up.

I very much hope that the Administration is pushing our friends with all their might, and I call on all of my colleagues in all of our meetings with European friends of NATO countries to emphasize this to them.

We put forth a horrendously powerful military establishment to protect them from the Soviet Union for two generations. All we are asking from them is to step up to the plate in Afghanistan and, hopefully, Iraq to get the common job done.

The democratic progress made in Afghanistan, thanks to its brave people and their belief in a better way of life, could come to naught if the drug economy continues to flourish. NATO must be a major presence in Afghanistan and it isn't today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you, Mr. Lantos. And I would like to state that I completely agree with your sentiments on NATO. Absolutely. We will now entertain 1-minute opening statements from such Members that choose to make them.

And I remind you that there is no law requiring you to make a 1-minute statement, but the floor will be open for you to do so, and the Chair recognizes Mr. Smith of New Jersey.

Mr. SMITH. With that admonition, Mr. Chairman, I will pass, but say that both you and Ranking Member Tom Lantos have really summed up the issue, and covered all the bases. And I would like to welcome Ambassador Quinn, who hails from my district.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you very much. Mr. Menendez of New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I have nothing to add.

Chairman HYDE. Ms. Ros-Lehtinen.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I pass, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Ackerman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Ranking Member Lantos. Last Sunday, many Afghans again embraced the process of choosing their own government. They courageously defied the threats by the Taliban to disrupt elections to vote for Parliament and provincial councils.

While the turnout was not as high as many of us would have liked, and we won't know the results for a few weeks, we do know that by the end of the year, Afghans will finally have in place all the pieces of a national government.

How well these pieces will function is another matter entirely. While the institutions of government will continue to need our support as they develop, I hope that we and the rest of the international community will now turn our attention to the pace and scope of reconstruction.

The fact that only 50 percent of eligible voters actually turned out in this round of elections is no doubt attributable to many things. Among them the complexity of the ballot and the concern about too many candidates with the same old names who have been fighting each other throughout the last 25 years.

But I am also fearful that a certain amount of disenchantment with the reconstruction process is beginning to set in, and with it a tendency to point to democracy as unable to fulfill the needs of average Afghans.

I am sure that everyone here today is aware that there were many candidates in the elections who ran on platforms questioning the whereabouts of all the international assistance that has been pledged. When you couple those questions with the many Afghans who still don't have acceptable drinking water, roads, schools, or health clinics, you can see why the average Afghan may be losing faith in democracy as a way to a better life.

The underlying problem, as I understand it, is that there is still a significant degree of insecurity in the country, and in the run-up to the elections, there were serious escalations of attacks by the Taliban. There was a serious and growing problem of narcotics trafficking, and most Afghans are subject to a horrific level of street crimes given the relative ineffectiveness of the Afghan police.

To put it bluntly there is still significant portions of Afghanistan where the wit of the central government simply does not run. The ironic thing is that according to a recent report by the Center for Strategic International Studies, the security situation in Afghanistan is the area where we have had the most success.

And that judgement leaves me with little faith that we have been effective elsewhere. We still need to win the peace in Afghanistan and 4 years after we ousted the Taliban, we still have a long way to go.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Rohrabacher.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much. Mr. Ackerman just mentioned how 4 years ago we defeated the Taliban. Let me note that we didn't drive the Taliban out of Afghanistan. The people of Afghanistan drove the Taliban and al-Qaeda out of Afghanistan. Yes, with our assistance, but the Northern Alliance was composed of Afghans, and we had very few troops there compared to what we have in Iraq, for instance. The people of Afghanistan helped us win the Cold War. The people of Afghanistan, at the great cost of hundreds of thousands, if not a million lives, and the people of Afghanistan drove the Taliban and al-Qaeda out after we were attacked, after the attack on us on 9/11.

Now the people of Afghanistan are battling to give their families and their fellow Afghans a chance for a better life, for health care—and there are so many babies who—I think it has the highest infant mortality rate in the world, and health care and education for their families and their children.

They have earned our admiration, and they deserve our support in this effort. I am very grateful that this Administration has done such a fine job in Afghanistan to try to help those brave people. Thank you.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Delahunt.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Let me just frame some questions so that I can pose them, and ask for your answers during my turn to pose to you questions. My friend from California, Mr. Rohrabacher, just talked about driving the Taliban out.

The Taliban still exists in Afghanistan, and what is the order of magnitude of their presence? I just read a story in the Sydney Herald that indicated that Afghanistan is becoming two countries; 24 provinces in the northwest and the center; and then 9 provinces in the south and east. Are we seeing the creation of two different nations; one with influence from the central government, and the other more influenced by the Taliban.

The Ranking Member indicated his dissatisfaction with NATO's engagement involvement. Why does NATO, and what rationale do they put forward for the reluctance to expand their presence and their activity?

Chairman HYDE. The gentleman's time has expired. Mr. Royce.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and after this weekend's elections, I think it is worth taking stock of where we are. Four years ago the Taliban did rule that country, and last year we saw 6,000 candidates running for election, and 582 of them were women.

And it is easy for us to lose sight of the progress that has been made. And Afghanistan certainly has a long way to go, but remains

a very fragile country, and one that is going to require a sustained effort and support from the United States and our allies.

And to that end, I would be interested in hearing from the Administration on plans to transfer command over to NATO by the end of 2006. I think both the Chairman of this Committee and the Ranking Member have indicated that NATO has proved very timid in the past.

This Committee, of course, has welcomed NATO involvement, but I think we have been very frustrated by its foot dragging, and I would like to hear more from the Administration on why they are confident that the NATO alliance can take on such a complex and difficult mission. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Fortenberry.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No comments at this time, except to thank Ranking Member Lantos for his very powerful and insightful comments in his opening statement regarding NATO.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you. Mr. Boozman.

Mr. BOOZMAN. No comments.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you. Ambassador Maureen Quinn is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service. She is currently serving as the U.S. Department of State's Coordinator for Afghanistan. She previously served as the American Ambassador to the State of Qatar from 2001 to 2004. Ambassador Quinn is a graduate of Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service.

Ambassador Nancy Powell is currently serving as the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. Ambassador Powell is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, and has served most recently as American Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and has also served as our Ambassador to the Republic of Ghana and to Uganda. Ambassador Powell is a graduate of the University of Northern Iowa.

Mr. Peter Rodman is an Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. Prior to joining the Defense Department, he was Director of National Security Affairs at the Nixon Center. He also served at the State Department and on the National Security Council staff during the Administrations of Presidents Nixon, Ford, Reagan, and the first President Bush. He attended both Harvard School of Law and Oxford University.

We welcome all of you, if you would give us a summary, 5 minutes, give or take, and your entire statement will be made a part of the record. And Ambassador Quinn, please proceed.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MAUREEN E. QUINN, COORDINATOR FOR AFGHANISTAN, BUREAU OF SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ambassador QUINN. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Lantos, Distinguished Members of the Committee, I would like to thank the Committee for this opportunity to speak today about our efforts to help Afghanistan become a secure, striving, and stable democracy.

I will make a brief oral statement, and submit the full text for the record. I especially want to thank this Committee for having

drafted the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act of 2002, and its amendments in 2004, and for all of its hard work on Afghanistan.

The United States is working to ensure that Afghanistan is never again a haven for terrorists, a major source of narcotics, or a source of instability or oppression toward its citizens.

Building roads, training security forces, and educating children, worthy though these objectives may be, are not ends in themselves. With congressional support, the Administration is working with Afghan leaders and our international partners toward strategic goals of establishing an Afghan Government that is moderate and democratic; respects the rights of its citizens, is characterized by a legal private sector economy, and is a dedicated partner on the global War on Terrorism.

The successful National Assembly and Provincial Elections of last Sunday are one more major milestone in Afghanistan's journey toward democracy. Afghanistan overcame enormous logistical challenges with about 5,800 candidates, running for 249 seats in the lower house, and 420 seats in 34 Provincial Councils.

Despite threats and intimidation, and in some cases limited access to voters and resources, 12 percent of the lower house candidates, and 8 percent of provincial candidates, were women.

While there was some allegations of procedural irregularities and electoral fraud, there appears to have been nothing systematic that would mar the elections. In fact, international and local observers overwhelmingly described the elections as calm, orderly, and secure.

Ballot counting is expected to take 2 or 3 weeks, and now the focus is turning to the seating of the national assembly. Along with an elected President and national assembly, and provincial council, Afghanistan is also developing its civil society and institutions.

With Congressional support, the United States is implementing projects to advance democratic values, such as respect for individual rights, and religious tolerance. We have supported the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, as well as an emerging independent media.

A commitment to a democratic Afghanistan is firm. The success of the Afghan people in laying the ground work for a stable, constitutional, and democratic government will have lasting implications for Afghanistan, the region, and the United States.

As Afghanistan's democratic institutions are growing, some security challenges remain. The Taliban and other insurgents tried to disrupt the elections process, but the Afghan National Army, and the Afghan National Police, supported by United States and NATO forces, successfully defended the integrity of the election process, and protected the citizens who took part in it.

Our security and presence in Afghanistan is, and remains, substantial. Operation Enduring Freedom continues to fight against remaining Taliban, al-Qaeda, and other insurgent elements.

The International Security Assistance Force under NATO has expanded to northern and western Afghanistan, and is now in the process of moving to the south. With our international partners, the United States is developing Afghan security forces.

The United States has trained about 50,000 police, and taken the lead in training the Afghan National Army, now at a strength of

approximately 25,600 troops. The process of disarming, demobilization, and reintegration is progressing.

The Afghan Government and the international community are also now embarking on the Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups program. Our strategic interests dictate that we take urgent steps to build up Afghanistan's capacity to establish the rule of law, and to create a stable framework for good governance.

Working with the Afghan Government to build a system that rewards transparency and is hostile to corruption must encompass political development, disarmament and reintegration programs, but also the narcotics industry.

Illicit drug production fuels corruption and political and economic instability. Continued United States support of counternarcotics is necessary to meet our strategic goals in Afghanistan.

Assistant Secretary Powell will describe our counternarcotics program in detail. Afghanistan's gains in establishing a democracy and stabilizing the security situation will be held in place with a foundation of economic reform.

Our economic programs to build capacity enable product sector expansion and produce jobs. To broaden the reach to markets, the United States is constructing highways and provincial roads, already having finished all 389 kilometers of the Kabul-Kandahar highway.

To cope with an educated and healthy work force, we have built 278 schools, and 326 clinics nationwide. Nearly 170,000 students are enrolled in schools under the Accelerated Learning Program, and over 75,000 teachers have received training under the same program. We have distributed over 35.6 million textbooks.

In May, President and President Karzai signed a joint declaration of the United States-Afghanistan's strategic partnership. Afghanistan requested the United States join in a strategic partnership to help meet the challenges that Afghanistan faces to its security, and to building a new government based on democratic principles, respect for human rights, and a market economy.

The international community, too, has played an important role in rebuilding Afghanistan, and donors continue to show their commitment to Afghanistan. Finally, for the recently held national assembly elections, provides strong evidence of continued international collaboration.

A total of 23 donors, including the United States, pledged \$159 million to cover UNDP's election-related costs. Our many achievements aside, Afghanistan has more work ahead.

That includes taking the necessary steps to cement gains in creating a sustainable secure environment, curbing drug production and trafficking, strengthening democratic institutions, educating people, and respecting and enforcing the rule of law and human rights, and developing relations with its neighbors.

The Government of Afghanistan is currently drafting its national development strategy, and is considering another international conference sometime early in 2006. It is critical for the international community to maintain its engagement, and keep its commitments.

Congressional support has been vital to our success in Afghanistan. With your future support, the United States will follow through on its commitment to helping Afghanistan evolve into a

nation built on democratic principles, adherence to the rule of law, a partner in the global War on Terrorism, and an active participant in the world economy. I will be glad to take your questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Quinn follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MAUREEN E. QUINN, COORDINATOR FOR AFGHANISTAN, BUREAU OF SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, I would like to thank the committee for this opportunity to speak today about our effort to help the nation of Afghanistan become a secure, thriving and stable democracy. I want to thank this committee for having drafted the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act of 2002 and its amendments in 2004, and for all of its hard work on Afghanistan.

The United States is working today to ensure that Afghanistan is never again a haven for terrorists, a major source of narcotics, or a source of instability or oppression towards its citizens. Paving roads, building security forces, and educating children, worthy though those objectives may be, are not ends in themselves. With congressional support, the Administration is working with Afghan leaders and our partners in the international community toward strategic goals of:

- Establishing an Afghan government that is:
 - Moderate and democratic;
 - Representative of responsible political elements in the country and formed through the participation of the Afghan people;
 - Capable of effectively controlling and governing its territory and borders;
 - Capable of implementing policies to stimulate economic and social development; and
 - Willing to contribute to a continuing partnership with the Coalition in the global war against terrorism.
- Developing Afghan society that is:
 - Supported by vigorous and enlightened civil institutions;
 - Respectful of the rights of all citizens, including minorities and women; and,
 - Characterized by a thriving, legal private-sector economy.

BUILDING DEMOCRACY

Afghanistan has come a long way since 2001. The Afghan people held an emergency loya jirga and established a transitional government in 2002. They formed a Constitutional Assembly in December 2003 and signed a new constitution with strong human rights provisions in January 2004. They held the first-ever democratic presidential election in October 2004, and the first parliamentary elections since 1969, last Sunday September 18.

Afghanistan's success in the implementation of the political process outlined in the Bonn Agreement, consolidation of its achievements, and the establishment of a constitutional, representative and effective government that embodies the aspirations of all Afghans are noteworthy achievements.

The orderly and successful National Assembly and provincial elections of last Sunday are one more major milestone on the path of democratization in Afghanistan. Afghanistan overcame enormous logistical challenges and procedural challenges with 5,800 candidates running for 249 seats in the Lower House and 420 seats in 34 Provincial Councils. Despite facing intimidation, societal restraints and limited access to voters in some provinces, 12% of the Lower House candidates and 8% of Provincial candidates were women. This election produced 69 different ballots, resulting in 142 tons of ballots distributed by planes, helicopters, trucks, horses and donkeys. The Afghans, with the support of the UN and international community, established 26,700 polling stations, recruited and trained 160,000 Afghans to work the polling and counting centers. This summer, just under 1.5 million new voters registered, bringing the total registered voters to 12.6 million voters. Forty-four percent of the new registrants were women; therefore 40% of the total voters list are women.

International and local observers overwhelmingly described the elections as calm, orderly and secure. In fact, some elections officials have stated that these elections may have been achieved one of the best results on record for a post-conflict election—in terms of a substantial voter turnout, low number of security incidents, effective Afghan and international cooperation in elections security preparation, and

strong Afghan participation in the electoral process and Afghan vigilance against fraud. While there were some allegations of procedural irregularities and electoral fraud, there appears to have been nothing systematic that would have influenced the overall conduct of the election. The Electoral Complaints Commission has received complaints and is in the process of investigating them. The counting is now taking place in 32 counting centers and is expected to take 2–3 weeks. As the votes are counted, the focus turns to the seating of the National Assembly.

Preparations and support for the new National Assembly are ongoing. The old Parliament building is being renovated as an interim solution until construction of the new Parliament is completed. The U.N. has designed a parliamentary support framework called SEAL (Support to the Establishment of the Afghan Legislature), which is divided into two phases. The first phase is designed to support the establishment of the administrative support structure of parliament. The second phase is designed to provide training and support to the elected members so that they are aware of their new roles and responsibilities, as well as continued professional training for the administrative staff. France, India, South Korea and other countries are providing support to the first phase while U.S. programs will support some activities in the first phase and the majority of the activities in the second phase.

With Congressional support, the United States is also implementing projects to accelerate development of grassroots democratic processes and civil society networks capable of advancing national goals and democratic values, such as respect for individual rights and religious tolerance. We have supported the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, which was established in the December 2001 Bonn Agreement and codified in Afghanistan's new constitution. Specifically, we are supporting an emerging independent media, with 35 independent radio stations established and broadcasting programs to 52% of the Afghan population. 40,000 radios have been distributed to hard-to-reach populations including rural women. Our programs provided training to almost 2,000 media professionals. Many projects have focused on women, such as the development of Women's Resource Centers in 17 provincial capitals. 4,500 women have graduated from a community literacy program to enter into the healthcare profession.

Our commitment to a democratic Afghanistan is firm. The success of the Afghan people in laying the groundwork for a stable, constitutional and democratic government will have lasting implications for Afghanistan, for the region and for the United States.

SECURITY

Though Afghanistan's democratic institutions are growing, some security challenges remain. The Taliban and other insurgents tried—but did not succeed—in disrupting the elections process. As was expected, security incidents in the south slightly increased prior to the elections. U.S. and NATO forces, plus 20,000 Afghan National Army soldiers and 32,000 police, defended the integrity of the election process and the citizens who took part in it.

Our security presence in Afghanistan is and remains substantial. Operation Enduring Freedom continues the fight against the Taliban, al-Qaeda, and other insurgent elements. Thirty-four countries are contributing troops to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), under NATO. NATO has expanded to northern and western Afghanistan and is now in the process of moving to the south. NATO currently leads nine PRTs headed by Germany, the United Kingdom, Norway, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, and Lithuania. The U.S. has one PRT under NATO. Outside NATO, New Zealand currently runs a PRT in Bamiyan, Canada commands a PRT in Khandahar, and South Korea shares responsibility with the U.S. for the Parwan PRT. The United States now commands 11 PRTs, mainly in the South and the East.

With our international partners, the U.S. is developing Afghan security forces. The United States has trained 50,000 police. As the lead nation for police programs, Germany has complemented our efforts by focusing on training police officials. We have taken the lead in training the Afghan National Army, now at a strength of approximately 25,600 troops which have been deployed in 16 provinces. The Afghan police and army have demonstrated their capabilities and professionalism in the field, they were especially effective in providing security for both the Presidential elections in 2004 and last Sunday's elections.

The process of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) (a program headed by Japan and the UN) is progressing remarkably, with all heavy weapons now cantoned. The demilitarization and demobilization phase ended last June. Reintegration assistance is ongoing, with 66,000 former combatants thus far participating in programs. Afghanistan with international community support is now em-

barking on the Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) program. During the candidate vetting process there was an extensive effort to vet candidates for any ties to armed groups. This program was successful, and the Disbandment of Armed Groups program is now being implemented countrywide.

The United States continues to work to diminish the role of regional warlords. Showing political courage and determination, President Karzai has succeeded in reducing the influence of several of the most prominent former warlords. Some have joined the national government or opted to run for political office themselves, becoming part of the political process. Some have also put their militias under the command of officers in the Afghan National Army. Though some have expressed concerns about the inclusion of some warlords or regional commanders in Afghan politics, we hope that the factional leaders will begin to understand that their future lies within the framework of democracy and the constitution—not outside of it.

Our strategic interests dictate that we take urgent steps to build the Government of Afghanistan's capacity to establish the rule of law and to create a stable framework for good governance. Working with the Afghan government to build a system that rewards transparency and is hostile to corruption, must encompass political development, disarmament and reintegration programs, as well as the narcotics industry. Robust drug production can contribute to an environment of corruption and of political and economic instability, and thereby undermine the democratically elected Afghan government. Unchecked trafficking and production of narcotics threatens to undermine other achievements the U.S. and our allies are making in the region and so the continued support of counter-narcotics efforts must remain an important part of overall U.S. policy in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan has been a major opium producing country for most of the last decade and remains the number one illicit opium producer in the world. As such, eliminating the entrenched drug trade and drug-funded corruption will require a long-term and sustained effort, to which President Karzai has pledged his support. The Government of Afghanistan is engaged in a broad effort to combat poppy cultivation, including a U.S. backed strategy and implementation plan. The United States is working closely and cooperatively with the United Kingdom, the United Nations and other countries to assist Afghan efforts in eliminating the poppy trade.

Our rule of law program works to decrease obstacles to citizens' access to the formal court system, increase the professionalism of judicial sector personnel, and strengthen the capacity of critical judicial institutions. To date, 24 judicial facilities have been constructed, with 5 more to be completed by the end of next month. We are sending advisors to train judges and lawyers.

REVITALIZING THE ECONOMY

Afghanistan's gains in establishing a democracy and stabilizing the security situation will be held in place with the foundations of economic reform and stimulus. Our economic programs aim to strengthen economic governance, building capacity and establishing an environment that enables the private sector to expand and produce jobs and income. Since the fall of 2003 to the present, 19,473 micro-credit loans have been distributed to farmers and rural businessmen, 364 km of farm to market roads have been rehabilitated, and 742,631 farmers have received training. There are three industrial parks under construction—in Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif and Kandahar. The private sector has already shown interest in these parks; all of the lots in the Kabul industrial parks have been subscribed. A program is underway to privatize state-owned enterprises. Total domestic revenue increased by 20% the past Afghan fiscal year.

With U.S. leadership the international community is rebuilding war-torn Afghanistan piece-by-piece. The United States is constructing highways and provincial roads, already having finished all 389 km of the Kabul-Kandahar highway and is 70% complete with the repaving of 326 km of the Kandahar-Herat highway. There are 704 km of provincial roads under construction.

We have built 278 schools and 326 clinics nationwide and handed them over to the Government of Afghanistan. Nearly 170,000 students are currently enrolled in school under the Accelerated Learning program and over 75,000 teachers have received initial or supplemental training under the same program and we have distributed over 35.6 million textbooks. We hear from teachers often. One teacher in Jalalabad has said:

"Communities didn't dare send children to school during the communists' rule, fearing they would be converted to communism. During the Taliban regime, the ban on girls' education and female employment further worsened the situation of girls and made them more vulnerable. Now lots of parents are waiting in line to get their children educated."

Our economic and social programs are providing Afghans with the opportunities to improve their lives—by educating their children, inspiring entrepreneurship and innovation or laying the foundations for future industry.

LOOKING AHEAD

The accomplishments in Afghanistan can be directly attributed to strong U.S. leadership and support to the courageous and determined Afghan people. Total U.S. assistance for Afghan reconstruction has increased steadily since 2001, and through FY 2005 tops \$9.0 billion cumulatively. This assistance has helped Afghanistan reinforce its newfound stability while engendering much goodwill among the population who see the U.S. commitment to their country as more than just rhetoric. On May 23, 2005, President Bush and President Karzai signed a joint declaration of the United States-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership. The strategic partnership's primary goal is to strengthen U.S.-Afghan ties to help ensure Afghanistan's long-term security, democracy, and prosperity. Afghanistan requested that the United States join it in a strategic partnership to help meet the challenges Afghanistan faces to its security and to building a new government based on democratic principles, respect for human rights and a market economy. The Strategic Partnership demonstrates the U.S. commitment to an Afghanistan that is democratic, free and able to provide for its own security.

The international community, too, has played an important role in rebuilding Afghanistan and donors continue to show commitment and staying power in Afghanistan. At the last International Conference on Afghanistan, held in April 2004 in Berlin, donor pledges equaled \$8.2 billion (including over \$4 billion from the U.S.) for reconstruction and enough to cover one hundred percent of the Government of Afghanistan's recurrent budgetary expenditures gap through the current Afghan fiscal year 1384, which ends in March 2006. Funding for the recently held National Assembly elections provides strong evidence of continuing international collaboration. A total of twenty-three donors pledged almost \$159 million to cover UNDP's election-related costs with the U.S. contributing \$40 million.

The United States and our international partners have re-affirmed our commitment to NATO-ISAF with the just passed UNSCR 1623 (2005) to renew the ISAF mandate. We have begun discussions on a framework for the next stage of reconstruction in Afghanistan. The Government of Afghanistan is developing its national development strategy and is considering another international conference sometime in early 2006. It is critical that the international community maintain its engagement and keep its commitments. For its part, the United States is committed to Afghanistan for the long-term and we will continue to help the Government of Afghanistan with the international community to work for accelerated progress on reconstruction.

Our many achievements aside, Afghanistan has more work ahead. This includes taking the next steps necessary to create a sustainable secure environment, strengthen democratic institutions, educate its people, respect and enforce the rule of law and human rights, and develop relations with its neighbors.

We thank Congress for its past support on Afghanistan. With your future support, the United States will follow through on building security forces, strengthening democratic institutions and reconstructing Afghanistan so that it is never again a haven for terrorists or source of instability or oppression of its citizens. I would be glad to take your questions.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you very much, Ambassador. Ambassador Powell.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE NANCY J. POWELL, ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU FOR INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ambassador POWELL. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Lantos, Distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to discuss with you our efforts to assist Afghanistan in curbing the production and trafficking of illegal narcotics.

I would also like to express our appreciation for Congress' continued commitment to Afghanistan, and its support for our programs.

I have submitted to the Committee a written statement that I will summarize here today.

The production and trafficking of narcotics in Afghanistan is a devastating threat to the stability of both Afghanistan and the surrounding region. Recent estimates from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime assert that 87 percent of the world's opiates are produced in Afghanistan.

In addition to all of the other negatives and debilitating consequences of opium poppy cultivation, such robust drug production contributes to an environment of corruption, and of political and economic instability, and thereby threatens the democratically-elected Afghan Government.

Afghanistan cannot hope to develop into a properly functioning democracy, with a stable government operating under the rule of law, if the drug trade dominates the economy. Unchecked trafficking and production of narcotics threatens to undermine all of the other achievements that the United States and our allies are making in the region.

The continued support of counternarcotics efforts must remain an important part of the overall United States policy in Afghanistan. The United States and the Government of Afghanistan, together with our international allies, are committed to addressing the drug threat.

In accordance with the Bonn Agreement, responsibility for different rounds of Afghanistan's stabilization was divided between the United States and our allies. I recently returned from a meeting in London with representatives from the United Kingdom, Germany, and Italy, to discuss our close cooperation, our progress, and ways to streamline our future efforts in countering narcotics production and trafficking in Afghanistan.

To combat this disturbing threat the U.S. Government has developed a five-pillar program, designed to meet the challenges of narcotics production and trafficking on several fronts.

Our public information pillar is focused on changing attitudes and galvanizing the Afghan populace to reject opium poppy cultivation and trade. Because our efforts are geared to the planting cycle, it is important that we spread an anti-poppy cultivation message to farmers as early as possible in the growing cycle and before planting decisions are made.

Ongoing efforts include the use of radio and print media to disseminate anti-narcotic messages to about 20 million people across Afghanistan. The Alternative Livelihoods pillar, spearheaded by USAID, seeks to establish economic alternatives to poppy cultivation.

While the Alternative Livelihoods pillar concentrates on creating rural economic growth in the key opium producing regions, USAID assistance is also being directed to reward provinces that have taken decisive action against poppy cultivation through a good performers fund.

The Elimination/Eradication pillar concentrates on preventing poppy-planting and eradicating those fields when prevention is unsuccessful. Based on the lessons learned this year, the strategy is being reconstructed to focus our efforts more at the provincial level.

Poppy elimination program teams will deploy to the major poppy cultivating provinces to mobilize and assist local officials in conducting an effective public information campaign, and discouraging poppy planting, and in implementing provincial eradication programs early enough for farmers to replant fields with legitimate crops.

Partnering with the Drug Enforcement Agency, DEA, our Interdiction pillar seeks to build Afghan capacity to destroy drug labs, seize precursor chemicals and opiates, and to arrest major traffickers.

Basic training for the National Interdiction Unit is complete and significant narcotic seizures have been reported to us this year. The law enforcement and justice reform pillar assists the Afghan Government in building its capacity to arrest, prosecute, and punish traffickers and corrupt officials.

The State Department is supporting training, mentoring, and infrastructure building programs for the police, justice, and corrections system. Having an effective arrest and conviction mechanism is vital. Overall, our counternarcotics strategy consists of these interrelated elements, one of which must be the deterrence of illegality through regularized legal structures.

I appreciate this opportunity to present the basic information on our program and will be pleased to answer your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Powell follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE NANCY J. POWELL, ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU FOR INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. Chairman, Congressman Lantos, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to come before you and discuss our efforts to assist Afghanistan in curbing the production and trafficking of illegal narcotics.

The State Department's Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) plays a key role in carrying out the President's National Drug Control Strategy by leading the development and implementation of U.S. international drug control efforts. We manage a diverse range of counternarcotics programs in 150 countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia, Africa, and Europe. These bilateral, regional, and global initiatives aim to fight the cultivation of drug crops at their source, disrupt the trafficking of drugs and precursor chemicals, and help build host-nation law enforcement capacity.

My statement provides an overview of the contribution of our counternarcotics programs to the promotion of stability and security in Afghanistan. I will begin by discussing the problem of narcotics in Afghanistan and our role in supporting the U.S. Government's five-pillar counternarcotics strategy. My remarks will highlight the changes to the five-pillar program that were made as a result of our reevaluation of last year's program. While broadly addressing the current status of the five-pillar program, I will specifically highlight the recent progress in our public information campaign, provide details on our eradication and anti-cultivation programs, and address efforts in assisting the Government of Afghanistan to improve justice and the rule of law.

OVERVIEW OF COUNTERNARCOTICS EFFORTS

The production and trafficking of narcotics in Afghanistan is a devastating threat to the stability of both Afghanistan and the surrounding region. Recent estimates from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime assert that 87 percent of the world's opiates are produced in Afghanistan. In addition to all the other nefarious and debilitating consequences of opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan, robust drug production contributes to an environment of corruption and of political and economic instability, and thereby threatens the democratically elected Afghan Government. Afghanistan cannot hope to develop into a properly functioning democracy, with a stable government operating under the rule of law, if the drug trade dominates its economy. Unchecked trafficking and production of narcotics threatens to

undermine all of the other achievements that the United States and our allies are making in the region. The continued support of counternarcotics efforts must remain an important part of overall U.S. policy in Afghanistan.

To combat this disturbing threat, the U.S. Government and our United Kingdom counterparts have developed a five-pillar program designed to meet the challenge of narcotics production and trafficking on several fronts. Our Public Information pillar is focused on galvanizing the Afghan populace to reject opium poppy cultivation and trade. The Alternative Livelihoods pillar, spearheaded by USAID, seeks to establish economic alternatives to poppy cultivation. The Elimination/Eradiation pillar centers on preventing poppy-planting and eradicating those fields when prevention is unsuccessful. Our Interdiction pillar seeks to build Afghan capacity to destroy drug labs, seize precursor chemicals and opiates, and arrest major traffickers. The Law Enforcement and Justice Reform pillar assists the Afghan Government in building its capacity to arrest, prosecute, and punish traffickers and corrupt officials.

Success of the five-pillar program in combating illicit drug production and trafficking in Afghanistan is critically important to ensure that democracy flourishes in that troubled country. The just-completed parliamentary elections demonstrate that democracy is taking root, but a democratic Afghanistan can not be fully realized unless we are successful in controlling the narcotics problem.

The United States and the Government of Afghanistan, together with our international allies, are committed to addressing the drug threat in Afghanistan. In accordance with the Bonn agreement, responsibility for different realms of Afghan stabilization was divided between the United States and our allies. The United Kingdom is the lead-nation for counternarcotics, the Federal Republic of Germany is the lead-nation for police programs, and Italy is the lead-nation for justice programs. I have recently returned from a meeting in London with representatives of these nations to discuss our close cooperation, our progress in each of these areas, and ways to streamline our future efforts in countering narcotics production and trafficking in Afghanistan.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

The goal of our public information efforts is to change attitudes in an Afghan culture where too many people have come to depend upon the cultivation of poppy despite its illegality, the major public health hazard that it presents, and its threat to Afghanistan's democracy. In this effort, President Karzai has played an especially prominent and essential role, repeatedly addressing the Afghan people to reiterate his commitment to eliminate drugs and to emphasize the danger and immorality of the drug trade. Using foreign assistance funding, we have helped the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Counternarcotics to develop and conduct an anti-drug public affairs program aimed at reducing poppy cultivation, the illicit drug trade, and drug use across the country.

It is important, based on our experience this year, that the Government of Afghanistan increase its efforts to spread an anti-poppy-planting message to farmers as early as possible in the growing cycle, before planting decisions are made. Our public information efforts reflect the timing of the planting cycle. Between early July and mid-October, nearly 4,000 broadcasts of counternarcotics messages are being aired on more than thirty radio stations, with an estimated audience of about 20 million people in the primary poppy-growing provinces and beyond. This program has also led to the distribution of 2000 posters, 170,000 stickers, and 200,000 matchbook covers with counternarcotics messages in these same provinces. We are also broadening our use of electronic media, preparing to advertise on transit vehicles such as buses and taxis, and developing radio dramas and mobile cinemas to disseminate a counternarcotics message. Later this year, we will also implement a long-term Public Information program focusing on marketing, verification, and capacity building.

Also, as part of the newly established Poppy Elimination Program (PEP), we expect to place public information specialists in the governors' offices of major poppy-producing provinces. These public information specialists will implement, at the beginning of the growing season, marketing techniques aimed at preventing farmers from planting poppy.

ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS

Providing farmers with economic opportunities and alternatives to poppy cultivation is an essential part of our counternarcotics strategy in Afghanistan. State and USAID have been working through non-governmental organizations to help provide alternative livelihoods assistance to Afghan farmers, with USAID now having the

primary interagency lead. While the Alternative Livelihoods pillar concentrates on creating rural economic growth in the key poppy-producing provinces, USAID assistance is also being directed to reward provinces that have taken decisive action against poppy cultivation through a Good Performers Fund. In order to provide concrete alternatives to poppy cultivation in the coming planting seasons, a major seeds and fertilizer program will soon be assisting farmers in all 34 provinces of Afghanistan.

ELIMINATION/ERADICATION

This pillar has been revised substantially in light of the results from this year's eradication efforts. In response to a request from the Government of Afghanistan, the United States assisted in the establishment of an Afghan Central Poppy Eradication Force (CPEF) in May 2004 to carry out eradication that was centrally directed and targeted. Eradication during the 2004 season began late with modest results. Eradication results in 2005 were also disappointing. The CPEF teams initially intended to deploy in January or February, but because of an exceptionally harsh winter, they did not begin operations this year until early April when they were sent to Kandahar province, a major poppy growing region. Once there, they ran into strong opposition from local farmers and had limited cooperation from local authorities—a pattern that was repeated elsewhere until the end of their activities in June. In the end, CPEF only destroyed approximately 216 hectares of poppy in five provinces (Kandahar, Helmand, Balkh, Takhar and Badakhshan) this year. Our deep concern with those results spurred a reexamination of our approach to crop eradication.

Based on the lessons learned, the Eradication Pillar of the U.S. five-pillar counternarcotics strategy is being restructured to focus our efforts more at the provincial level. Poppy Elimination Program (PEP) teams, composed of 8–10 Afghan and international experts and advisors, will deploy to the seven major poppy producing provinces (Kandahar, Nangarhar, Uruzgan, Farah, Badakhshan, Helmand, and Balkh) to mobilize and assist provincial officials in conducting an effective public information campaign, to discourage poppy planting, and to implement provincial eradication programs early enough for farmers to replant fields with legitimate crops. The U.S. is funding six of these teams, and the U.K. is funding the seventh. Specifically, the PEP teams will coordinate public information campaigns and alternative livelihoods programs, monitor cultivation and compliance, report significant developments to senior levels of the Afghan Government, provide airlift support for the range of counternarcotics activities, and, when necessary, request eradication by provincial or national authorities.

Our review also illuminated the need to change the approach to forced eradication. As a result, the Central Poppy Eradication Force (CPEF) will be reconfigured into the Afghan Eradication Force (AEF) consisting of more mobile units bolstered by air assets to support the PEP efforts. The AEF is designed for deployment by the central government, if agreed-upon poppy elimination objectives are not met by provincial authorities.

To support the PEP teams, we have purchased ten Huey-II helicopters, which will provide emergency medical evacuation, support and protection of ground personnel if attacked, logistical resupply, air transportation, reconnaissance, and command and control for counternarcotics operations. Current estimates put the first two helicopters ready for deployment in January 2006. We are working with the Department of Defense to provide temporary basing space until we arrange for a permanent Main Operating Base in Kabul. Although the primary function of the helicopters will be to support PEP teams, they may also be used to support the Afghan Eradication Force and the National Interdiction Unit, which will implement law enforcement operations.

Our experience with illicit crop reduction programs worldwide has shown that a credible threat of forced eradication remains critical to the success of a comprehensive counternarcotics strategy. There are some indications that the increased perception of risk in growing poppy was one of the factors contributing to reportedly lower poppy cultivation this year.

INTERDICTION

Interdiction efforts are focused on decreasing narcotics trafficking and processing in Afghanistan. In conjunction with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and our international allies, we are helping to build Afghan capacity to destroy clandestine labs, seize precursor chemicals and opiates, and arrest high-volume traffickers. The DEA has trained and mentored five Afghan National Interdiction Units (NIU) of 25 members each. Basic training for all five units was completed

in June 2005. The DEA reports that approximately 33.9 metric tons of opium and 4.4 metric tons of heroin have been seized and destroyed in Afghanistan in the first half of 2005. Significant narcotics seizures have continued through the summer.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND JUSTICE REFORM

An immediate priority of the Government of Afghanistan is to establish security and rule of law throughout the country. We are working closely with the Government of Afghanistan and the Federal Republic of Germany, the lead-nation, to enhance police training programs that include mentoring initiatives. We are also supporting reform at the Ministry of Interior and providing critically needed infrastructure and equipment to ensure that the police have the skills and tools they need to perform effectively and professionally.

The goal is to provide basic training to 50,000 national police (including 3,400 highway patrol officers) as well as to 12,000 border police. To support police training needs, we established a Central Training Center in Kabul and Regional Training Centers (RTCs) in Gardez, Mazar-e-Sharif, Kandahar, Konduz, Jalalabad and Herat. As of this month, we have trained more than 45,000 police, including nearly 3,000 border police and 1,100 highway patrol officers.

FY2005 Supplemental funds enabled us to take the next step in training Afghanistan police by shifting the focus from classroom instruction in basic policing skills to field training. We also initiated a Field Training Officers (FTO) program in Kabul earlier this year, and supplemental funds provided the resources to expand that program nationwide to ensure that police receive the monitoring, evaluation, and feedback that is necessary to complete their training.

We will also continue to work with the Government of Afghanistan to implement police reform initiatives at the Ministry of the Interior to help transition its police force into a professional organization that respects democratic values. In 2004, we deployed 30 senior police advisors to the Ministry of Interior to address organizational reform and help develop revenue-generating initiatives. The advisors also helped develop community policing projects and anti-corruption initiatives. This year, they are implementing a pay and rank reform initiative that restructures the Afghan police organization, reorders and reforms the current rank system, and adjusts the pay scale to achieve pay parity with the Afghan National Army as well as ensure that the wages are commensurate with the cost of living.

The Justice Reform Program focuses on providing a framework of laws and processes that will support counternarcotics law enforcement efforts. The United States Government continues to work with the Afghan Government to effect the extradition of high-level traffickers indicted in the United States. Without legal consequences to follow Afghan interdiction efforts, we would essentially leave our well-trained police powerless to do any more than simply destroy the drugs they seize. Having an effective arrest and conviction mechanism is vital. As such, our overall counternarcotics strategy in Afghanistan consists of interrelated elements, one of which must be the deterrence of illegality through regularized legal structures.

Data provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime suggests that the rule of law message is reaching the public. In interviews conducted with farmers in 2004, 23 percent of interviewed farmers indicated that the legal ban on poppy deterred them from planting, while 16.2 percent cited fear of imprisonment. Those numbers rose in 2005 to 31.1 percent of interviewed farmers citing the poppy ban, while 39.9 percent cited fear of imprisonment. While these numbers have not been confirmed by U.S. Government estimates, they do imply that the rule of law message is reaching the public, even at this early stage.

The Justice Reform Pillar has two primary components: criminal justice reform and corrections support. A subcomponent of both is support for counternarcotics prosecution. Programs in both criminal justice reform and corrections are designed to support the work the police and interdiction units are doing in bringing drug production and trafficking to a halt.

Supported by Department of State funding, the Department of Justice (DOJ) has sent two senior, experienced prosecutors to Kabul to provide counternarcotics law reform advice and assistance and to build and support the Vertical Prosecution Task Force (VPTF). The DOJ effort has led to the redrafting of the narcotics and money laundering laws and the authority for the narcotics court's nationwide jurisdiction in Afghanistan. The VPTF will consist of judges, prosecutors, investigators and support personnel, who will be organized, trained, and mentored by the DOJ prosecutors. Currently, plans are underway to send two more U.S. prosecutors, and several experienced investigators, to increase the size and effectiveness of the task force. An Afghan Presidential Decree allows for transfer of significant counternarcotics cases to Kabul for prosecution by the task force. It is especially important to support the

VPTF with mentoring now, as the first mid-level traffickers are arrested and are being held awaiting trial.

The trial and detention of these traffickers will take place in the temporary Counter Narcotics Justice Center (CNJC), which will be built in cooperation with the Department of Defense. We are committed to fund the operations and maintenance of the CNJC for two years. The facility will hold mid- to high-level narcotics offenders who are awaiting or are on trial by the Vertical Prosecution Task Force. It will also temporarily incarcerate convicted offenders in a separate wing until the permanent counternarcotics prison is complete.

Other programs on the justice reform side focus on training and education and include the U.S.-Afghanistan Master of Laws Program and the National Legal Training Center. The U.S.-Afghanistan Master of Laws Program is a \$2 million, three-year grant offering Afghan legal educators the opportunity to participate in an intensive year-long Master of Laws program at a U.S. law school focusing on comparative law, modern legal practices, and criminal law and procedures. Prior to departure, Afghan candidates undergo English training at Kabul University.

The National Legal Training Center (NLTC) is a joint U.S./Italian initiative to provide a centralized resource for specialized training, licensing, and accreditation of Afghan lawyers and judges. It will also foster career development for those in the legal profession, and improve institutional coordination. The NLTC will be housed on the University of Kabul campus.

The Justice Sector Support Program (JSSP) focuses on helping Government of Afghanistan Ministries improve criminal justice reform across Afghanistan. Under the JSSP, we are providing training and mentoring to the Afghan Ministry of Justice and Attorney General's Office on criminal justice, corrections, and police/prosecutor coordination. The JSSP advisors will also track and assist in the implementation of key criminal legislation, and promote institutional capacity-building projects. The JSSP will also provide standardized training for judges, prosecutors, and defense counsel.

In addition to the justice reform component, our overall justice program in Afghanistan includes a corrections program component, organized as the Corrections System Support Program (CSSP). The CSSP provides training mentoring and advice to the Afghan corrections system. It also provides capacity building assistance, such as tracking and office management systems. Importantly, the CSSP will aid in infrastructure development, specifically the refurbishment of prisons. Kabul-based mentors and trainers will work with regional elements to help the Prison Administration expand its capacity to manage provincial, as well as national, corrections facilities, with focus on major poppy growing and drug trafficking regions and emphasis on internationally-recognized human rights.

CONCLUSION

Realizing that these five pillars cannot operate independently of each other, we are focusing on improving interagency communication and cooperation. A task force, organized and led by a senior official acting under the authority of the Ambassador, has been set up to enhance coordination between U.S. agencies at Embassy Kabul. Here in Washington, we meet weekly to coordinate in the Afghanistan Interagency Operations Group, led by the National Security Council and the State Department's Bureau of South Asian Affairs. Within the Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, I have established a working group that meets weekly to review progress across all pillars. I am confident that effective communication combined with the sharing of ideas among colleagues working towards the same goal will enhance our ability to effect positive change in Afghanistan.

I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you, Ambassador. Mr. Rodman.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE PETER RODMAN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. RODMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not have a written statement, but I would like to make some remarks if I may. The success of the elections demonstrates a very important point, which is that our strategy in Afghanistan is political as much as it is military.

In fact, it may be political more than it is military, because what we are doing is helping the Afghans build their institutions to marginalize the extremists politically even while they are hunting them down militarily.

So the security situation and the political situation are very much interconnected. In fact, I would say that the strategic price in this war is precisely this political process, and the strategic objective of the enemy must be to try to derail this political process and to disrupt it, which I think is their only hope for regaining power.

So we expected therefore a spike in violence in the run-up to the election. We saw this last year in the run-up to the Presidential election, and we expected it this time. And the months of July and August were in fact very violent months, and the United States suffered some serious casualties.

We thought again that this was the Taliban trying to derail the elections. What is interesting is that in the 3 weeks, the 2 to 3 weeks before the election, they were not able to sustain, or they chose not to sustain, a spike in violence, and really the violence subsided a little bit, at least compared to, say, what they had done before the Presidential election.

Now, we can only speculate why this happened. One thing we do know is that the Pakistani Army was much more active and intensified its operations in the tribal areas, which was very important to our common strategy. That is one thing that we know.

But otherwise it is hard to say. It may be that the Taliban were coming face to face with their strategic dilemma, which is that if they disrupt the election, they lose any remaining claim to popular support, and they knew that this would be an unpopular thing.

And, of course, if they refrain from disrupting the elections, they are allowing the government to strengthen itself. And that is where we are. After the Presidential election, we did see in effect that the Taliban were a bit demoralized. I mean, they were wondering—I mean, this is a blow against them.

Legitimacy is the most powerful weapon that we have on our side, and we saw after the Presidential elections some of what we may be seeing now. The Taliban are the ones with the strategic problem, and we saw last time some demoralization, and some fragmentation of the Taliban.

Some of them are determined to fight on forever. Others may be weary of this losing—what may seem as a losing cause. And others, maybe the less extreme among them, may be susceptible to an outreach effort by the Afghan Government to try and bring people into the political mainstream.

And President Karzai has such a program. That has had some success in the past, and I think that this would be a good moment for him to do that. Again, to reach out and try to co-op some of the people on the other side.

But that is where we are, and just to sum up, I would say what I think what some of the Members have said, is that if you look back 4 years, this is an extraordinary transformation.

Four years ago, this was a country that was one of the poorest in the world, devastated by a generation of horror and political vacuum. And since then, we have helped the Afghans to build new in-

stitutions, including security forces, and with our help, of course, but they, as Congressman Rohrabacher said, they have shown their own commitment.

And so I think all of us, the American people, Congress, the Administration, can be proud of what we have helped the Afghans to accomplish in this period. Thank you very much.

[No prepared statement was submitted.]

Chairman HYDE. Thank you, Mr. Rodman, and we will now entertain questions to the panel, and first is Mr. Lantos.

Mr. LANTOS. I want to thank the witnesses for their testimony. I have several quick questions and I will leave you enough time for an answer. All the cost reports indicate that there has been a dramatic increase in the sophistication and strategy of insurgent attacks in Afghanistan.

Bullets are more lethal, improvised explosive devices are more technologically advanced, and tactics are more sophisticated. What steps are being taken to deal with this growing problem that threatens the security of Afghanistan and our forces in-country?

Secondly, President Karzai made a singularly puzzling statement this week. He said that there is not a big need for military activity in Afghanistan. Was this a momentarily lapse of realism, or what is behind this incredibly puzzling and, to some of us, disconnected statement from reality?

Thirdly, one of my many idiosyncracies is that I read the legislation that we pass, and we passed the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act, which was enacted in December 2004.

It called on the Administration to develop a 5-year strategy to address the long-term security and development needs of Afghanistan, which as I read it would include Fiscal Years 2005 through 2009.

The strategy that was transmitted to us includes, at the most, a 3-year strategy, and not a 5-year strategy, and it is highly debatable whether the plan we have is a strategy or merely a list of things that we hope will be done.

Why did the Administration fail to comply with this legislation? Does the Administration have a 5-year operation strategy for Afghanistan, or are we to suppose that the Administration assumes that there will be no need for a strategy beyond 5 years? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Rodman, perhaps you could begin?

Mr. RODMAN. Let me start on the military side. It is true that over the years the Taliban have gotten more sophisticated in their weaponry, but I think we are one step ahead of them.

And strategically, I do not see them as gaining ground. Congressman Delahunt mentioned or painted a picture of maybe they are controlling half of the country, which I think is not how we perceive it. We think they are not achieving their objectives, and in fact the government is extending its authority politically around the country through political means.

And that we and Pakistan are increasing our pressure on them in the border regions and so forth. But it is still a deadly fight when there is a fight, and we saw that in July and August.

But I think strategically, I think the Taliban are the ones with the more serious problem. As for President Karzai's statement, I

think there were a number of things coming together in one press conference.

President Karzai has raised with us in the past some of the tactics, some concern about some of the tactics that coalition forces use in civilian areas, but we have discussed this with him and come to an understanding with him many months ago. We have a procedure for consultation in advance of operations, and I don't think that is really an issue.

Mr. LANTOS. Would you say that he misspoke?

Mr. RODMAN. I can't say what he had on his mind, but I think the military operations—I mean, we are constantly coordinating with him and his government on any operations that are undertaken.

It may be that he is speaking to his people, who would like to see the violence subside. I can't explain why he expressed that. I mean, we see that the fight is still on, and he knows that, and in fact operationally our relationship with them is good.

Mr. LANTOS. How about the NATO issue?

Mr. RODMAN. The NATO issue, which you discussed very eloquently in your opening remarks, we agree with you. Secretary Rumsfeld does not go to a NATO meeting without raising this very strongly, as he did a week ago in Berlin.

And we have a concern about the national caveats, by which some countries are very reluctant to take any risks, and they don't go to the latrine without a vote of their Parliament. This is not helping.

On the other hand, many other NATO countries are with us very strongly and helping us. We also think that we are making progress in developing a new command structure for the NATO ISAF Command, which would be an important step toward the merger of these two activities, which is one of our central objectives.

And while they were last week—and while some countries don't like it, we think the consensus will be, or the majority will be, something along the lines that we want, and we will see this, I think, in the next few weeks as NATO comes up with an operational plan.

And the command structure would have—the NATO ISAF Command would have two deputies, and one deputy commander would be dealing with stability operations and reconstruction; and the other deputy commander would be a dual-hatted American, who would be in the middle and very much involved in our OAF activity, and also have a NATO ISAF hat.

So if we achieve a consensus on that, that is a step toward what we are trying to achieve. We have a long way to go. We also think, thirdly, that—you know, ISAF is taking over sections of the country stage by stage. As you said, they have done the north and the west, which are not the hardest part.

But the plan is for them to move into the south and the east over time, which are harder, but that is the plan, and I think there is a consensus in NATO to do that, and we will certainly push for it.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Smith of New Jersey.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let me just ask Ambassador Powell. You note that recent estimates of the

United Nations Drug and Crime Unit assert that 87 percent of the world's opiates are produced in Afghanistan.

Does that estimate comport with U.S. estimates as to those numbers? And you point out in your testimony that during 2004, and after you go through your five pillars, which I think are very good and mutually enforcing, that 2004 seemed to be in line with modest results, and eradication results in 2005 are also disappointing.

And that pretty much the lesson learned is that we need to change the approach to forced eradication with our PRT teams. I wondered if you might elaborate on what that really looks like. You have a paragraph on that, but maybe a little bit more in depth.

And, Ambassador Quinn, in your testimony, you mentioned the very important education, and we have provided training to almost 2,000 media professionals, and the fact that 35 independent radio stations are broadcasting to roughly half of the population.

I would just note that in—I mean, that is all fine and I am very much in support of that, but the 2005 Report on Press Freedom from Freedom House rates Afghanistan as “not free” as you know, and suggests that they are one of the worst countries for press freedom in Asia, and a pertinent phrase out of that report is that, and I quote, “that journalists continue to be threatened and harassed by government ministers. The intelligence service, militias, and others in positions of power, as a result of their reporting, many practice self-censorship, to avoid writing about sensitive issues, such as Islam, national media, or crimes committed by special warlords.”

And my question is what are you doing? I know that we are training journalists, but are we also on the other side of that coin trying to invoke a sense of tolerance, and that is what democracy is all about, and the press should be unfettered and able to report on what the government does.

What are we doing on that side of it to admonish our friends, and our good friends and allies in the government on that score? Ambassador Powell.

Ambassador POWELL. Just commenting on the U.S. estimates on the crop for this past year will be out next month. They are not out yet. We have some indications that they will be consistent with the UN, but we don't have the exact figures.

In terms of the percentage of the world's opiates, I think we are in the same general ball park with UNODC on that. On the PRT teams, this is a concept that we are putting into seven provinces, key poppy producing provinces. There will be teams of 8 to 10 individuals, with 6 to 8 Afghans, and two ex-patriarchs, going to each provincial headquarters.

They will be working with the governor's offices in key areas, such as the public information campaign, making sure that the anti-planting message is getting out in local languages, and in ways that will make sure that the local population understands the message.

They will be working with the governors' law enforcement people to identify crops where they have been planted, and to develop poppy eradication plans, and implementation of forced eradication where that is necessary at the local level.

They will be verifying the eradication that is done by local officials, and they will be providing information back to Kabul and to the Afghan Government, as well as the United States Government, on what is happening in these key provinces.

They will also be working with the governors' offices to ensure that the Alternative Livelihood Programs are being administered in ways that people are aware of what is available, and what is being done, so that they have an alternative to planting the opium.

Mr. SMITH. Ambassador Quinn.

Ambassador QUINN. If I may, I would like to briefly answer Mr. Lantos' question looking out at the 5-year strategy. We are aware of that, and our approach in submitting that report, we decided to take 2004 as a base because of our planning strategy that started from there, in terms of trying to accelerate success in Afghanistan.

In addition, the law requires regular updates, and so we thought that we could respond and look out further with these updates. But we are aware of those concerns, and we look forward to talking more to the Committee and the staff to respond to data requests.

Because I can assure you that there is multiple planning, long term planning, with the U.S. Government on the issue. On the issue of the freedom of the media, Mr. Smith, we certainly are aware of some of the concerns that you have mentioned, the incidents with journalists, and the case of self-censorship.

What I certainly wanted to try to do this morning was to highlight the progress that has been made, because in a number of cases, we do have journalists taking and putting on programs in Afghanistan, and it is a new era for them.

And on these concerns and on these issues, we do have an ongoing dialogue with the government, and particularly with the Minister of Communication and other areas, to continue to encourage and to instill the kind of values that we consider so important.

Chairman HYDE. Ambassador, we have two votes pending, and so we will recess for—one is for a 15-minute vote, and the second one is a 5-minute vote. So we will recess for 30 minutes and try to return as promptly as we can so that we may continue the questioning, if you will stand by. Thank you.

[Recess.]

Chairman HYDE. The Committee will come to order. The Chair recognizes Mr. Ackerman of New York.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. My good friend, the gentleman from California, reminded us and stated before that it wasn't we who drove out the Taliban, but the Afghan people and Northern Alliance.

If that is indeed the case, and if the relatively rosy scenario that you portrayed to us is so, does this indicate that we are preparing to declare victory and leave; and more importantly, if we left this afternoon, what would be the chances of the Afghan people and the Northern Alliance being able to maintain themselves against al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and anybody else?

Mr. RODMAN. Let me start. They are not ready militarily. We have a plan going this year and the next few years to bring the training, bring their training up to a level where they can operate independently. But right now, even though we have a substantial

number of battalions, and good units, well trained and equipped, they operate with us side-by-side.

They have a national presence. I mean, they are good, but I think before we—I mean, the Taliban, they do still exist, and they are capable of doing harm. So I think we would want to continue that training program.

Now, if the fighting subsides, we can continue training. I mean, the fighting and the training are somewhat separate activities. But the short answer is that this is a long term commitment to Afghanistan, and they still need help in a number of areas. Economically certainly, and in the military area, we are certainly prepared, and should be prepared to—

Mr. ACKERMAN. So you are saying that they are not as capable as of yet to maintain their predominance over the vanquished on their own?

Mr. RODMAN. Well, 4 years ago, they started with zero, and we have this program to help them train up an army, and a police force, and we are doing that.

Mr. ACKERMAN. How close are we?

Mr. RODMAN. I think a few more years is our schedule. We think they are on schedule, and they are on the schedule that we have set, but I think another—well, I don't want to make a prediction or give a timetable, but I think another few years. We expect that every year they are going to get stronger.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Perhaps you can share with us the status of police training and armament, and give us a rough percentage of the number of police that have actual vehicles, and weapons, and adequate training, and facilities.

Mr. RODMAN. We can give you some information on that, sir, yes. Ambassador Powell wanted to comment on that as well.

Mr. ACKERMAN. You will supply us with that at a later time?

Mr. RODMAN. I will see. Some of it may be classified, but we will give it to you on one basis or another. I am sure that some facts can be given to you and we will do that.

Ambassador POWELL. If I could just comment on the police training.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Ambassador.

Ambassador POWELL. We are on target to meet our target of 50,000 for the basic police training course, and an additional 12,000 border police. This is very, very basic training. It will be followed up with some police—

Mr. ACKERMAN. Are we on target to meet the 50,000 goal? What is the target for now that we have met? What is the number?

Ambassador POWELL. We are just short of that. It is very close to 50,000. We will meet it by the end of the year. We are continuing to work with DoD and with other donors to provide the vehicles and the weapons that the police need.

DoD has contributed, and Hungary has made a contribution of weapons, and so there are still enormous gaps in their equipment, particularly in their vehicles, but they are being started.

We also will be starting a mentoring program that will get police training out to the police stations to follow up on this very basic training, and that is a very key point, to be able to ensure that the

lessons that they have learned in the early courses will be actually able to carry out.

The letter that the State Department sent to the GAO in June basically indicated that the Departments of State and Defense needed to develop more detailed plans for completing and sustaining the Afghan army, the police force, and address the issue of the total lack of—the basic lack of equipment, and weapons, and ammunition, and radios, et cetera.

In the 2 months since that letter could you give us a rough idea of what has been done to implement that commitment?

Ambassador POWELL. We are continuing to work. We now have an officer working right in the command structure of CFC Alpha, which supervises the security forces training in Afghanistan.

We are developing and we have developed a strategic document that outlines this. As I said, we are identifying the gaps in the equipment and getting that filled by other countries, as well as DoD and the United States.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Could you tell us which countries have been helpful in filling the gap?

Ambassador POWELL. Hungary is the most recent one, and China provided material for uniforms, which the Afghan people did not have, and Germany is providing training for the police officers. They have established a police academy in Kabul that provides a 3-year course for police officers. They have the lead in the police training.

We are also working on the reform of the pay and rank structure. The current structure, or the previous structure of the Afghan police was very top heavy. So we are looking to reorganize it, and to ensure that the pay given to the police is comparable to that of their army equivalent.

Mr. ACKERMAN. When you say we are looking to, does that mean we have started?

Ambassador POWELL. We have started that and it is fully in process. We have people working with the Ministry of the Interior, and expect to have that plan ready to go very soon.

Mr. ACKERMAN. A last brief question for Secretary Rodman if I may, Mr. Chairman. Has the Defense Department ever done the review of the effectiveness of the provincial reconstructions teams that it had announced, and if so, would you share that review with the Committee?

Mr. RODMAN. I am not familiar with the document, but I will look into that.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Okay. There was supposed to be a review of the provincial reconstruction, and it was supposed to be by DoD, USAID, and sometimes Afghans. If you could get back to us on that. Maybe it does not exist, but let us know.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Rohrabacher.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and first and foremost before I get into some questions, I would like to say that having followed the Afghan issue since the time that Peter and I worked in the White House together, I think this Administration is doing an excellent job.

And you have to not compare what is happening to the perfect, but instead to where we were 4 years ago, and 5 years ago, and

where we are at today. And there has been tremendous progress made, and again when the Taliban were in power, just half of the population of Afghanistan, women, were being treated in the most inhumane way, and as entities without any rights at all, and being abused tremendously by the system.

And today, if you only look at half that population, there has been such tremendous progress made along that line, and toward more democratic government. And people who have decent standards now and want to live in a modern world are now playing the dominant role in Afghanistan, rather than radical representatives of radical Islam that hate everything that the west and we in the United States stand for, and they dominated Afghanistan just 5 years ago.

And of course was used as a base to attack the United States. So there has been tremendous progress, and we need to acknowledge that as we look at perhaps some of the ways that we can do the job better.

I have one particular area that I am concerned about. When we state that 87 percent of the world's heroin production comes from Afghanistan, obviously that is going to or is already causing major negative repercussions. And, Ambassador Powell, the United Nations has \$12 million that they have not spent in doing research on mycoherbicides, which other tests have already shown have the potential of totally eliminating the heroin crop, and the opium crop, without affecting other plants.

But it needs some further testing. Why is the State Department so hesitant to step forward on this? I have been after them for 2 years on this issue, but the mycoherbicide alternative has yet to be developed by the State Department, even though it promises to totally eradicate the opium crop in Afghanistan.

Ambassador POWELL. We have been looking at this and particularly at the urgency of attacking the opium problem. As you stated, it requires a great deal more of research. It also has not had the political support in Afghanistan from President Karzai, who has supported the ground eradication, and we have been trying to support that.

We will continue to look at it. I know that our officials did talk to Mr. Karsto when he was here from the UN, and I will look at it again.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Well, I would hope that before we have another hearing on this that you will be able to report to me that the \$12 million that the United Nations currently has available for research on this mycoherbicide has been taken advantage of by our Government in order to prove or disprove the use of this alternative.

If we are going to be successful in Afghanistan doing anything, we must be bold, and I will say that on the issue of opium, this Administration has not been bold. We have been bold in many other ways, but not in this area.

Some had said, "We can't really push women's rights there until everybody is ready, and that there is a political will for women rights." No. Making sure that there are equal rights for women in Afghanistan is the right thing to do, and we were bold about it, and now there are changes taking place.

Getting rid of the opium crops so that people will go to other alternatives and providing those other alternatives, that is a bold step as well, and if we take it, the people of Afghanistan will go in that direction.

But we have to be the leaders. So I don't expect that the next time that we have a hearing after asking questions about this, and working on it for 2 years, that the State Department's answer is going to be that we are going to look into it again. That we are going to finally look into it.

This \$12 million, I specially want a report on whether or not we have taken up the offer of the United Nations to use that for mycoherbicide research. Let me note that there are other—and I am going to be putting, with the permission of the Chairman, I will submit for the record some alternative or some suggestions of new alternatives that could make farm production profitable without opium in Afghanistan.

And so this is again something that we need to do, and the Administration has been very successful in other fronts. I am a little bit concerned about that we have been going along with disarming the Northern Alliance, the very people that drove the Taliban out. But that is a whole other issue. I think that the heroin issue is much more important. So, thank you very much.

Chairman HYDE. The gentlelady from Minnesota, Ms. McCollum.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you, Mr. Chair. First, Mr. Rodman, the comments that you made about some of our allies in Afghanistan were not appreciated by me, and I am sure that they reflect your own personal opinion. Am I correct? Thank you.

Well, I am going to kind of set up what I am concerned about and then ask some questions. For all the military, economic, and democracy building that the United States and our allies, and the Afghan people are engaged in, the majority of Afghan people still live in absolute misery.

The human condition in Afghanistan, by virtually every human development indicator available, is far from success, but paints a picture of human misery, especially for women and children.

Afghans involving security situations and Parliamentary elections, and the eradication of poppies are all important issues that I support, but we also need to be contributing toward the long term quality of life in order to have stability in Iraq. In my opinion, there can be no peace, no democracy, and no stability where there is extreme poverty and extreme misery.

In fact, the independent 9–11 Commission points out how these very conditions allow the seeds of terrorism to plant roots. We know that what is going on with maternal child health indicators is not good. Many, many Afghan women die in the delivery of their children.

And 25 percent of the children who are born in Afghanistan will not make it to their fifth birthday. So, my questions to our Ambassadors, what are we doing for the fact that 87 percent of Afghans do not have access to clean water, as well as the maternal child health indicators, and the expectancy, that 25 percent of the Afghan children will not make it to their fifth birthday? What are we doing about the 88 percent of Afghans who do not have access to adequate sanitation?

Now, Secretary Powell, you stated that Afghanistan cannot hope to develop into a properly functioning democracy with a stable government operating under the rule of law if the drug trade dominates the economy. That is a common sense statement. Ambassador Quinn, my question is where are the examples of a country developing properly to a functioning democracy, and how can that move forward when 25 percent of their children die, with tens of thousands of mothers dying, and when hunger and disease, and early death, are an expectation?

The United States spends more money on the operation of our Embassy in Kabul than we are investing in health and child survival. And it sounds from the testimony today that these appalling conditions are an afterthought of United States policy in Afghanistan, and I see no way in which the U.S. policy can be successful as long as these conditions of human misery exist, and as the 9-11 Commission said, allows the seeds of terrorism to grow.

Ambassador QUINN. Well, I am glad that you brought up this subject, because I think it starts when we look at the issues, the basic poverty in Afghanistan, and it is sad. But what we see is that the new Government of Afghanistan, Karzai and his cabinet, are very much focused on that issue, and on meeting—the Millennium Development goals that were set, targets for developing countries, to meet and to improve the conditions regarding women and children that you mentioned in the health sector, and in education, and elsewhere.

And the government, that is what they are talking about as they develop their overall economic strategy, and in our programs that support it. Obviously, I mentioned in my testimony the schools that we have built, and the clinics that we operate.

We have been successful, and the program that I myself have had the opportunity to visit is an accelerated learning program for girls. You have girls from the ages of 5 to 17 and 18, and they are all in the same class in the accelerated program to catch up for the years that they lost under the Taliban.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chair, my time is limited. I am aware of what is going on in the educational sector, and I am very pleased that USAID has made success in that. What are our programs about the survival rate of children?

Ambassador QUINN. In that particular area, we have a very successful program in the area of training midwives. I don't have the exact statistics with me today, but that is the kind of program that makes a huge difference throughout the country, and we are pursuing that.

And I would be glad to give you the particular statistics. The Minister of Health of Afghanistan was just here on a recent visit with some of his senior colleagues, and to focus on things and advancing, and expanding, the ongoing programs that we have, such as the immunization program that has been successful with our contributions over the past couple of years.

So there are ongoing programs, and we are looking at opportunities where we can expand them, with the help of Congress, and certainly with the Congressional support we have. We also have programs in sanitation and water. I am familiar with some of our ef-

forts in the cities of both Kabul and Kandahar to look at those issues.

So I think that we are making progress, and in particular areas we are seeing movement forward to these goals that the Afghan Government has set. But we are focused on those areas, and I would be glad to give you details in writing.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chair, if we could have that given to you, and if you could share that with the Committee, I would like to see what the plan is. Not only the U.S. plan, but the NATO plan, the coalition plan, and the government's plan making these goals a reality. Thank you.

Ambassador POWELL. Mr. Chairman, could I respond just briefly on the counternarcotics efforts.

Chairman HYDE. Surely.

Ambassador POWELL. Our Alternative Livelihood Program is just one part of the USAID program, but it very directly targets some of the things that you have been talking about. And in particular cash for work programs to work on irrigation and water facilities that will improve the health.

And it also provides cash income that allows people to buy their food for their children, and to improve their chances for survival. So all of these programs are interrelated, but the counternarcotics program includes efforts to improve the basic standard of living.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Burton of Indiana.

Mr. BURTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Defense Department is handing out to kids over in Afghanistan these soccer balls that show that drugs are bad, and that is good, because that will help kids realize the danger.

And the State Department, I understand, are giving out these matchbooks which show that it is better to produce crops that are not poppy crops than to produce heroin, and that is good, too.

But, you know, I have been in government a long, long time, and I don't know how many hundreds of meetings I have been to where we have talked about drug eradication, and fighting the drug war, and winning the drug war, and it goes on year, after year, after year, after year.

And the drug problem never goes away. Seventy percent of the people in American prisons today are in there for drug related crimes, 7 out of 10. We build more prisons all the time, and we put more people in jail, and it is all because of the profitability that is in drugs.

And every time a group comes up here, and you are very well-intentioned, and you tell us what we are going to do to win the war against drugs, and how to stop it and all that stuff, it never ends. It never ends, and it is never going to end unless we take positive action to do something about it.

I mean real action and not baloney, and not new programs, but just do something about it. Now these mycoherbicides, we talked to Mr. Walters about this when he was here, the drug czar, and we asked him if he would do something about testing this, R&D (research and development), because we were told that it really works.

And that you can eradicate this stuff, and you can literally force people to plant alternative crops if you destroy the marijuana, and

the heroin, and the cocaine that is being grown. But we won't do it.

And I cannot figure out why. Why won't we do the R&D? And even if you gave everybody that produces poppies \$10 a month, or \$20, or \$50 a month, you would be way ahead money wise if you could eradicate the drug problem that we have in this country and throughout the world.

So, I will tell you that I am just a little bit tired of going to hundreds and hundreds of meetings since the 1960s and I hear the same thing year after year and nothing changes.

And it doesn't change. Now if we can come up with a mycoherbicide that works, and I think we can, then by golly why not use it? And I hope that somebody will carry this back to Walters in our Government. I don't know what kind of deal is being cut with these other governments that are making money out of these drugs, but something has got to be done.

Otherwise, the terrorists who are making money out of it, and using it to buy weapons in Iraq, are just going to continue on and on. We need to dry up their money supply, and one way to do it is to eradicate the drugs.

There are a lot of things that they can plant besides that. But first we have got to stop the drugs. End of the sermon, and now I have two questions real quick, and I have given that sermon so many times that I am just tired of talking about it.

The Rendon Group does contract work for DoD in Afghanistan in developing capacity building in the Ministry of the Interior, especially in the anti-drug message and anti-planting message, which appears to work better than eradication efforts, a 21 percent reduction through the message.

The Deputy Minister of Counter Narcotics, General Daud, recently praised Rendon and asked for their continued assistance in the effective counternarcotics information campaign, which appears to be working.

[The information referred to follows:]



د افغانستان اسلامي جمهوریت
The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
د کورنیو چارو وزارت
Ministry of Interior



September 19, 2005

To Whom It May Concern,

I write in support the Rendon Group continuing to help develop the Ministry of Interior press office.

Since starting at the MOI October 2004, Rendon has trained press officers and helped us raise the image and credibility of our ministry, with both the local and international media.

This capacity building is the future of Afghanistan. The Rendon Group has done this, and should continue. They have come up with many initiatives and followed through to make sure the MOI has benefited.

We hope they continue to remain at the MOI so we can continue to build our press office. Specifically, we want them to help support and train additional MOI staff. The staff they have trained are the finest press officers in Afghanistan and we need more professionals of that standard.

There remains much work to be done and I encourage you to extend their contract.

Sincerely,

20.9.05
Lt. Gen. Mohammad Daud Daud
Dept. Interior Minister
for Counter Narcotics

Mr. BURTON. Does DoD support Rendon's continued presence in Afghanistan doing this PR-related capacity building job, or do you want the U.S. State Department to now take over this task as well? That is one question.

So, let me give you the other question, and then I will let you folks respond. And don't forget about the mycoherbicides, because the ding is going to get louder and louder until we do something.

DEA has requested extradition of four drug dealers from Afghanistan, one of them a major drug trafficker. Little seems to be happening on this vital item of drug cooperation.

What is the Karzai Government doing under both the 1988 UN Vienna Convention on Narcotics, and the more recent UN Convention on Organized Crime, both of which may serve as a legal basis

for extradition, even absent a bilateral agreement with the United States?

And if you would answer those two questions, I would really appreciate it. Thank you.

Mr. RODMAN. Let me start on the first question. On the Rendon Group, the reason that the Department of Defense got into this is that the State Department asked us in December 2003 for support, and so we had the budget for it, and were able to make this contract, and we did this at the State Department's request.

And the Rendon Group has done an excellent job. Since then the Department of State has gotten a \$3 million appropriation for a public information effort in the 2005 supplemental, and we have been told that is the more appropriate way to do it.

So we deferred to our colleagues, and they now have appropriated funds to do this mission, but I don't know if my colleagues want to add something to that.

Ambassador POWELL. We have two programs going on in public information, a very short term contract that is right now targeting the anti-planting campaign. We have a scope of work that is in the process of being prepared and almost finalized, a \$4.5 million contract that will be bid competitively, and we have welcomed the participation of Rendon in that process.

Ambassador QUINN. I can answer on the question of extradition. The Government of Afghanistan had decided to prosecute particular individuals in Afghanistan. However, the Convention, and I believe the one from the early 1990s, would establish the basis for extradition. I think that is something where we are talking to them about, and will continue to talk to them about in Afghanistan.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Delahunt.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I am going to proceed to two questions that Mr. Lantos previously asked. In terms of the costs to the American taxpayer, since the initial strike against the Taliban some 4 years ago, what is the cumulative cost in terms of our engagement in Afghanistan? Ambassador Quinn or Secretary Rodman? If you know.

Mr. RODMAN. I don't have a cumulative total. I believe it is running at about \$900 million or a billion a month. That has been the average.

Mr. DELAHUNT. So that is about \$48 billion to \$50 billion?

Mr. RODMAN. We can do the arithmetic, but I don't know the number.

Mr. DELAHUNT. So we have invested about \$50 billion; is that a fair statement?

Mr. RODMAN. Possibly, yes.

Ambassador QUINN. And we have our assistance funds as well.

Mr. DELAHUNT. In addition to that \$50 billion?

Ambassador QUINN. Yes, in addition to.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Lantos raised the issue about the 5-year plan. Is there a 3-year plan, Secretary Rodman?

Mr. RODMAN. Ambassador Quinn has that report. That is a State Department document.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Just yes or no; is there a 3-year plan?

Ambassador QUINN. Oh, yes. I think our planning goes beyond 3 years.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Okay. So there is a 5-year plan pursuant to the Congressional mandate?

Ambassador QUINN. What we did in response to the Congressional mandate is that we started with 2004, and looked out to Fiscal Year 2008. We did that because where we were in our planning cycle, we thought that was where we could be most responsive to Congress, and what were asked for were targets, and focusing on plans and reaching targets. That is what we presented.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I would concur with that decision. I think that does make sense. Is there a price tag, and has that been scored and has that been crossed out?

Ambassador QUINN. Given that we submit our budgets to Congress on a yearly basis, we did not put dollar figures on the plan.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Can you give an estimate of what that cost would be?

Ambassador QUINN. No, sir, I cannot at this time.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Okay. Thank you. I want to get back, Peter, to you. I need some clarification from you, because there are recent reports—there is a headline from my hometown paper, that Karzai challenges United States and Afghanistan terror war.

And your answer was—I would characterize it as somewhat murky. Unintentionally, I am sure, but at least to me it was somewhat murky. Let me just read what is reported in the newspapers.

President Karzai yesterday challenged the need for major foreign military operations in Afghanistan, saying that air strikes are no longer effective, and that United States-led coalition forces should focus on rooting out terror bases and support networks.

His call for a new approach and attacking militants was made under the fierce fighting in Afghanistan since the United States-led forces in late 2001, with more than 1,200 people killed in the 6 months leading up to the most recent elections.

He also said that foreign governments should concentrate on terrorists that are trained on the supply to them, of the money coming to them, and a vague reference to support that militants allegedly get from neighboring Pakistan. Afghanistan officials have repeatedly accused Pakistan of aiding Taliban rebels. Now, help me, educate me.

Mr. RODMAN. I apologize if I was murky. I think I am having some trouble understanding what President Karzai said, because he said a number of different things.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Well, let us just focus on that.

Mr. RODMAN. On air strikes, we agree with him. I mean, I don't think that air strikes are the main tactic right now. Secretary Rumsfeld, I think, made a comment the other day saying that is not the main focus of our military efforts.

President Karzai's relationship with Pakistan is complicated, and has been difficult, and we have been doing our best to—

Mr. DELAHUNT. But is he actually saying, however, that the major source of the problem is the reluctance on the part of Pakistan to deal with the Taliban that are on the Pakistani-Afghan border?

Mr. RODMAN. Our view is that Pakistan is doing a lot and doing more, and we give credit as I said in some earlier remarks, we give credit to Pakistan for being much more active, and much more ca-

pable, and much more effective in areas of Pakistan along this border.

These are tribal areas that Pakistan has never had a military presence in. So it is politically complicated. We give them credit for being effective. We think, in fact, in the last couple of months, in the pre-election period, that they did what we had wanted them to, and to be more active.

Mr. DELAHUNT. So there is a difference of opinion on this particular issue between the Karzai Government and DoD?

Mr. RODMAN. We give more credit to Pakistan for making a significant effort, and there is a tri-partheid of the three governments where we again try to make sure that they work together well, and we think there has been a big improvement.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. McCotter.

Mr. MCCOTTER. To the panel, thank you for your service to our country. I suppose in many ways I agree with what Representative McCollum said, except that I would just add that under such conditions democracy can advance very tenuously, as it did in medieval England.

But at some point the window closes. When I look at Afghanistan, I am very concerned that the window will close, and I say that for a number of reasons, but it goes back to a principal reason that I have said before; is that the transformational change must be accompanied by a transactional benefit to the people.

The former could be measured by the latter, and in Afghanistan, we are seeing a transformational change to a democracy, without an accompanying transactional benefit to the people. In many ways, this explains the diminished turnout this time as was expressed by one of our previous speakers.

And it also points why so many people in the end may go back toward the iron hand that once enslaved them and brutalized them, because they see no better option. Democracy can only succeed where it is viewed as the best vehicle for changing the conditions which you find oppressive.

And if democracy does not work, they will go back. I point out the Kerensky Duma, and I could point out the Aymara Republic, and other democratic experiments which have failed to provide transactional benefit to its people.

Now, like Mr. Delahunt before me, perhaps you can enlighten me. If we are looking at things such as alternative livelihood, or poppy eradication, do we look at it from the Afghan's point of view? An Afghan citizen would look at this and say that I grow crops to meet a demand that comes from the West.

And if the West does not want the drugs to fill the acuity of modernity, I don't make money. And what we have to do then is we have to find what are we going to do that is going to replace those profits. What can we possibly do?

I am not sure that they particularly care about a soccer ball. I don't think they care about matches. I think they care about are they going to make more money doing something else, and I don't think that we have provided them that yet.

I think that when you look across the country, I don't think that they have been able to say to themselves does this democratic vehi-

cle which we hope to ride to our future aspirations is producing for us, not when there is such mortality in the country.

We tend to focus on the political and the military. I hear that all the time. I hear that here, and I hear that in Iraq. And it might be that what we do here. We talk about diplomatic issues, and we talk about constitutions, and we talk about structures, and legalisms, and international comity, and we talk about our military strategic advantage with these people, or this is air strikes versus that.

That is not what ordinary people talk about. They don't talk about it like that in Afghanistan, and they don't walk about it like that back home in my district. They care about the benefit to themselves, and especially their loved ones.

And if they don't like the people that are representing them, they throw them out. What are we doing to address the fundamental, tangible needs of the Afghan people as they make this transformation change?

Chairman HYDE. Would the gentleman yield to me, and I will give you extra time if you require it. Some years ago, I was in Burma where they grow a lot of poppies, the Golden Triangle.

And I stood in the middle of a field as far as the eye could see of these beautiful white and red poppies, and I was told that crop substitution doesn't really work because coffee is not ambulatory. You can't get it on the backs of donkeys or horses and get it out of the mountains.

And if you could, the profit is negligible compared to the opium serum that they collect and have the laboratories. So this notion of crop substitution, which is an answer, isn't very simple. It is very difficult.

And so the problem of getting the drugs out of Afghanistan and substituting something sounds nice, but I would like to know what you are going to substitute for the opium that has a market value far in excess of what it should.

Number Two, one of the problems is the demand, and it is coming from this country, and coming from Western Europe, and some day it is going to get so bad that we are going to get tough. We are going to go after users, and we are going to build quonset huts, and have them be in incarcerated facilities for users, because we can't win this fight on its present terms.

Lastly, the warlords is another subject. You have a country that is decades in the past run by a bunch of tough guys with the weapons, and it is not easy for Mr. Karzai to go in and say, "Give up your power. Give up your authority, and give up your weapons. Let the central government run it."

This is an enormously complicated problem, and there is a lot riding on it, and I just felt this burst of rhetoric, and so forgive me for imposing on your time, and I will yield back.

Mr. McCOTTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As is so often the want of our people, two Irishmen are agreeing under the guise of a disagreement. I agree that it is hard to substitute the crop, but my point was that it is the profit motive that drives this predominantly, and that we have to make a more concerted effort to find out whether we can or cannot supplant that.

I absolutely agree with you that the demand side is the problem. No one puts out a supply of something that no one wants. It is the hunger for these drugs in the West, and in our own country, that is leading to the prices to escalate. It is our own curse coming back to haunt us.

As for the warlords, warlords are warlords, and warlords must be dealt with. But the problem that I have with the Karzai Administration at this point, and our approach to this is that unless you shore up your base where your reach is, and unless you effect their transactional needs at the grass roots fundamental family level, then you are never going to get to the point where you get to deal with the warlords.

So I agree with you. I agree that it is complex, but again, despite the fact that I was educated by the Jesuits, Mr. Chairman, I must point out that the bottom line is that the more complexity tends to come from a lack of understanding the root principles.

And I tend to equate complexity with confusion, because if something becomes complex, there is a root cause behind it. One can then track back if one has a grasp of the complexity back to the root causes that have led to it.

So I agree with you, but my concern is that we have not gone to the root cause of the problem, and that we are dealing with partial complexities, where we cannot grasp the larger picture, because the larger picture is very small, and very intimate, and yet very intensely felt by the average member of the Afghanistan population. Thank you.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you. Does anyone from the panel wish to jump in on this? We have a couple of more questions.

Ambassador QUINN. I wanted to say briefly, because I think we do agree with the importance in a democracy that you have to show that democracy can deliver. And I think with the support that we have had from Congress, that the United States has made a major investment in roads, in energy, dams, hydroelectric, and others.

And the water programs in the cities as I mentioned before, as well as some measures that have been taken in terms of introducing a stable currency, and banking laws, and encouraging other economic laws.

The Provincial Reconstruction Teams were mentioned earlier, and those teams have done a fabulous job of helping to link Karzai and the central government to the provinces, as well as to do immediate needs, quick impact type projects. So I thought it was worthwhile just to mention that. Thank you.

Chairman HYDE. It was, and is, and Mr. Sherman of California.

Mr. SHERMAN. Secretary Rodman, you talked about how Pakistan is doing more to control the tribal areas, and that they are a force for good, and better than they get credit for. Can you tell this Committee that there is no basis for the belief that the intelligence service of the Pakistani Government is not giving money, and weapons, and training to the Taliban today?

Mr. RODMAN. I will answer the question. I may ask Ambassador Powell if she wants to add to or correct what I think is the case. There may well be elements of some of these institutions in Pakistan that are still wedded to an older policy from the days when the Taliban were Pakistan's ally.

We believe that the Government of Pakistan has reversed that policy.

Mr. SHERMAN. I assume that the intelligence service of the military of Pakistan is part, and I have not asked you to psychoanalyze the individuals to know whether some of them in their hearts harken back to a pro-Taliban position. Are millions of dollars in cash and weapons going from the treasury of the Pakistani Government, through its intelligence service, to the Taliban?

Mr. RODMAN. I doubt that very much. I don't think that is what the issue is.

Mr. SHERMAN. And that is what the President of Afghanistan was saying. So if you are here on behalf of our State Department, saying that he has got his facts wrong, that is something that we ought to understand.

Mr. RODMAN. I don't think that is the case. Again, I think from the Afghan point of view, they would obviously like more help from the other side of the border. As I said, I think that every campaign that the Pakistan Army has done has been more effective than the previous one. I mean, it is complicated for them to be operating in that area.

Mr. SHERMAN. I think you have addressed my question, and I would like to move on to the drugs issue.

Mr. RODMAN. Okay.

Mr. SHERMAN. It is clear that it paints a picture of a bureaucracy, a U.S. bureaucracy, that just wants to keep doing what it has always done, rather than research into these herbicides.

I realize that you are not a biologist, but are we doing all the reasonable levels of research to find something that we can spray on these poppy fields that will kill the poppies, but will not kill the replacement crops that we are trying to popularize?

Ambassador POWELL. I believe that we are trying very hard to do that. Let me talk just a minute about increasing the cost of production. This is part of what the elimination and eradication program does, and if a farmer believes that his crop is going to be destroyed, by whatever means, it certainly will be factored into—

Mr. SHERMAN. We know all the means that we have used up until now have been an abject failure. You can come to parts of Los Angeles and I will show you. But how much research are we doing? Is this even important to your effort?

Ambassador POWELL. I will need to get the figures from the drug czar. I do not have it because the State Department does not do the research, but I will get that for you and for Mr. Rohrabacher.

Mr. SHERMAN. Okay. We face a difficult foreign policy issue in Afghanistan. First, I do want to comment that I am surprised that our costs per month in Afghanistan are so high, because on a per soldier basis, they are higher than they are in Iraq, and I think that would surprise most people, per American soldier on the ground.

You certainly hear more than five times as much about Iraq, and battles in Iraq, and we have more than five times as many soldiers on the ground in Iraq. We have competing goals in Afghanistan. We want to stop the poppy production, and at the same time, we want to get along with just everybody in Afghanistan who wasn't working with the Taliban.

How do we reconcile those two, and what are the marching orders from the White House as to what is more important; destroying the poppies, or destroying the Taliban?

And I know that the convenient answer is to say that we are doing both, but there are times when those objectives contradict.

Ambassador POWELL. I think that in Afghanistan—and I am coming up with arguing both. And we discussed the complexity of the issue a couple of different times here, and certainly our efforts in support of them are to increase the costs in a number of different ways by providing the kind of assistance that they can develop the ability to prosecute and jail traffickers. We have already moved forward with the program—

Mr. SHERMAN. The ordinary farmer is not going to jail. I mean, you could walk right by Karzai's office, and say, hey, I have got a problem with my government. Oh, by the way, my occupation is poppy grower. And you are going to walk out of there with your governmental problem solved or not solved, but you are not going to be in handcuffs because you are a poppy grower.

Ambassador QUINN. Exactly, but the elements—

Mr. SHERMAN. You are a citizen in good standing of—

Chairman HYDE. The gentleman's time has expired. I don't want to foreclose the Ambassador answering, but if the Ambassador could answer and then we will adjourn.

Ambassador QUINN. I just wanted to reinforce what Nancy Powell said previously, that our program is comprehensive, and that we are moving forward, and perhaps we can provide you with Q&A for the record with some more detail.

Chairman HYDE. I was a little premature. Mr. Royce is still here and deserves a hearing. Mr. Royce.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I wanted to ask Mr. Rodman, have the United States and our NATO allies here agreed to merge, by the end of 2006, the ISAF and United States-led commands in Afghanistan?

And I know that Secretary Rumsfeld was in Berlin last week working on this with NATO defense ministers, and here is my concern on this. This Committee has certainly welcomed increased NATO involvement in Afghanistan, and I have argued in Berlin more participation on the part of NATO and the Germans.

But I think it is also very true that this Committee has been constantly frustrated at the pace with which the alliance has moved. And I think the expansion of NATO provisional reconstruction teams, and as you will recall, that took months and months to negotiate.

The insurgents, and the Taliban, and other enemies, aren't taking months to reorganize as it took our European allies here. And we know that the Alliance has struggled with security and basic equipment to get their PRT teams up and running.

I am hopeful to see more NATO involvement in Afghanistan, but given the inadequacies and the foot-dragging that we have observed, I have got to ask this question. Is now the time to give NATO complete command? I would like your opinion on that.

And I would remind you that NATO's troops, frankly, have been well received by Afghans. I have seen it with the PRT teams. They are well received on the ground, and Afghanistan will have to be

a place of robust United States engagement for some years to come, and so does this seem to be the time to give NATO complete command now?

Mr. RODMAN. We have a game plan that I think reflects the capability, and I would not try to accelerate the schedule. I think there is a plan for NATO to take over the PRTs around the country starting with the easier ones, and graduating to the others.

The countries that will take over, the more difficult PRTs will be the ones that don't have the national caveats. In other words, the countries that are capable and willing to take on serious missions.

I think that we have a plan that NATO operates by consensus, but we think we are getting our way, and a change in the command structure that I described, if we can get agreement on that in the coming weeks, that moves us down the road.

I mean, everyone knows that we are the dominant military power there, but it is a good thing if we can get the allies to take on a greater responsibility.

Mr. ROYCE. I agree with you on that.

Mr. RODMAN. But I think we have to stick with this, and even if it take some time.

Mr. ROYCE. But when we relinquish command—and Germany and France have categorically stated that they don't want ISAF performing any combat mission, and I think our Secretary of Defense has made it very clear of his concerns in the past about getting any kind of counterterrorism capacity out of NATO in this regard.

So if we couldn't get the equipment in theory out of NATO, we are faced here with a country of many complexities and that is going to require a very flexible and fast moving force to be in place.

In NATO, inherently, at least at this time, is not that force. So I think that this Committee would like to understand exactly how either you are going to make it that force in light of all the information that we have experienced, versus whether we really want to go down this road.

Mr. RODMAN. What I hope will happen is that they will reach agreement in the next few weeks on the command structure changes, which would put NATO into the OEF. I mean, the deputy ISAF commander, who will be a dual-hatted American, will be part of the OEF mission.

That is a big step toward merger in the command structure. Secondly, there are capable countries in NATO who are ready to take on PRTs, and countries that don't have or aren't limited by the national caveats. So that process should move forward.

So if we can do those two things, then that process is moving ahead, and if we succeed in the overall military effort, then it may well be that the United States won't have to carry the same share of the burden. I think that is a worthwhile objective.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Chairman, thank you for your patience. I appreciate it.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you for your endurance and patience. I want to thank the panel for a very instructive and helpful presentation. You have added to our knowledge of this important part of the world, and we look forward to seeing you again. Thank you.

Mr. Rodman and Ambassadors, we have some questions that we didn't get a chance to ask. If you don't mind, we will send them to you in writing. Thank you. The Committee stands adjourned.
[Whereupon, at 1:10 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

